Irrigation project pending for environmental clearance

1105. SHRI SUDARSHAN AKARAPU: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of major and minor irrigation projects that are pending for clearance with his Ministry from the environment point of view in respect of projects submitted by the Government of Andhra Pradesh;

(b) the number of irrigation projects of Andhra Pradesh in respect of which Environment Impact Assessment study had been carried out as on 31st October, 2006;

(c) the number of irrigation projects which have been cleared from the environment angle;

(d) whether the Government of Andhra Pradesh have submitted revised project proposals in respect of those projects where objections have been revised by his Ministry; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) No irrigation project which require environmental clearance (EC) from the Ministry of Environment and Forests is pending as on date.

(b) Environment Impact Assessment (EIA) study is a statutory requirement for all the projects including those in irrigation sector which require environment clearance under EIA notification 1994 and 2006.

(c) During 2006, 10 (ten) irrigation projects have been accorded environment clearance, out of which 8 (eight) projects are from Andhra Pradesh.

(d) and (e) Do not arise in view of the reply to parts (a) to (c) above.

Environmental clearance of projects

1106. SHRI B.K HARIPRASAD: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the over-centralized functioning of the authority for environmental clearances has been negatively impacting the investment;

(b) whether the new environment impact assessment norms under the New Environment Policy 2006 envisages empowerment of State Governments and even municipalities and panchayats to clear certain types and scales of projects; and

(c) by when the new norms are likely to be in place?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) and (b) No, Sir. Under the Environment Impact Assessment (EIA) Notification dated 14th September 2006, the environmental clearance process has been decentralized. According to the Notification, all Category 'A' projects will require environmental clearance at the Central Government level while all Category 'B' projects will be considered by the State Level Expert Appraisal Committee (SEAC) and the environmental clearance shall be accorded by the State Level Environment Impact Assessment Authority (SEAC).

(c) The EIA Notification is already in place *vide* Notification No. S.O. 1533 (E) dated 14th September 2006.

Decline in number of elephants

†1107. SHRI SURENDRA LATH: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is fact that the number of elephants in two sanctuaries of Orissa *i.e.* Chandaka sanctuary and Usha Kothi sanctuary are continuously declining;

(b) if so, decline in number of elephants during the last five years;

(c) whether the Government have implemented five approved elephants corridor projects; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor and the steps taken or being taken to increase the number of elephants and other wildlife animals alongwith their security?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) and (b) No, Sir. As per the

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.